The story of ‘Ravanesan’ revolves around Ravana’s struggle to maintain his heroic stature in the face of crisis. Following a violent injustice done to his sister, Ravana retaliates by abducting Seetha. Her husband Rama’s message to Ravana, and the manner in which it was conveyed by the messenger poses a further challenge to Ravana’s sense of honour. Mandothari, the wife of Ravana, also disputes his decision to go to war against Rama, challenging his authority as a husband, father and king. Ravana’s relentless pursuit of retributive justice is the key to the tragedy of Ravana. It is also the tragedy of the people around him. ‘Ravana’ portrays the sufferings and struggles of the ordinary people trapped by the war machine. This play is based on koothu, an eastern Sri Lankan Tamil traditional dance, and also the modern theater form. The play has been evolving for the last 50 years and had been staged many times in Sri Lanka.

Professor S. Maunaguru is a theatre practitioner and scholar from Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. He is best known as a proponent and innovator of the ‘koothu’ form of traditional Tamil theatre. He was Professor of Fine Arts at the Eastern University of Sri Lanka until 2009, and currently leads a multi-generational group of performers who experiment with ‘koothu’ at the Theatre Lab in Batticaloa. Prof. Maunaguru wrote ‘Ravanesan’ and performed the title role in 1963, and has subsequently reworked the play several times to reflect contemporary issues.

**DATE**  Wednesday, 12 February 2014  
**TIME**  3.00pm to 5.00pm (screening followed by Q&A session)  
**VENUE**  Research Division Seminar Room, AS7 #06-42, Kent Ridge Campus, NUS

Please email sassec@nus.edu.sg to register